

What is claimed is:

1. A nutritional additive system for pets comprising:
(a) separately packaged nutritional additive; and
(b) a package of base pet food containing said separately packaged nutritional
5 additive.

2. The nutritional additive system of claim 1, wherein said separately packaged nutritional additive is packaged in an air-tight container which substantially prevents the introduction of air and which allows for dispensing of the nutritional additive without substantial introduction of air into said container.

10 3. The nutritional additive system of claim 1 wherein said container is a plastic container and said plastic contains UV absorbers to prevent UV exposure to said nutritional additive.

4. The nutritional additive system of claim 1 wherein said separately packaged nutritional additive includes an applicator for applying said nutritional additive
15 to said base pet food.

5. The nutritional additive system of claim 4 wherein said separately packaged nutritional additive including said applicator further includes a dosage control device which regulates the amount of nutritional additive that may be applied to said base pet food.

20 6. The nutritional additive system of claim 1 wherein said separately packaged nutritional additive comprises a dry additive comprising one or more of a vitamin, and/or one or more of a mineral, and/or one or more of a herbal type additive.

7. The nutritional additive system of claim 1 wherein said separately packaged nutritional additive is in liquid form and comprises one or more of a vitamin, and/or one or more of a mineral, and/or one or more of a herbal type additive.

8. The nutritional additive system of claim 1 wherein said nutritional additive
5 comprises vitamins selected from the group consisting of A, C, B₁₂, D, E, K, thiamine, riboflavin, panthothenic acid, niacin, biotin, pyridoxine, folic acid, choline and mixtures thereof.

9. The nutritional additive system of claim 1 wherein said nutritional additive
10 comprises minerals selected from the group consisting of calcium, phosphorus, potassium, sodium, chloride, magnesium, iron, copper, manganese, zinc, iodine, selenium, cobalt, molybdenum, cadmium, arsenic, silicon, vanadium, nickel, lead, tin and mixtures thereof.

10. The nutritional system of claim 1 wherein said nutritional additive
15 comprises herbs selected from the group consisting of St. Johns Wort, Kava Kava, Echinacea, Ginkgo Biloba, Ginseng, Catsclaw, Camomile, Golden Seal and mixtures thereof.

11. The nutritional system of claim 1 wherein said base pet food contains
0.0 – 1.0 % (wt) of any vitamins, minerals and/or herbs.

12. The nutritional system of claim 11, wherein the concentration of said
20 vitamins or minerals or herbs in said base pet food is below about 0.1 % (wt).

13. A nutritional additive system for pets comprising:

(a) separately packaged nutritional additive

(b) a package of base pet food containing said separately packaged nutritional additive, wherein said base pet food is characterized as having been prepared at a temperature at or above 200 °F and/or a shear rate at or above 100 sec⁻¹.

14. The nutritional additive system for pets of claim 13, wherein said base pet food is characterized as having been prepared at a temperature range of between about 200 – 500 °F and at a shear rate of about 10² – 10⁴ (sec)⁻¹.

15. A method for increasing the nutritional value of a pet food, said method comprising:

(a) forming a base pet food wherein said base pet food is formed by exposure to temperatures above 200 °F and/or a shear rate at or above 100 sec⁻¹;

(b) supplying packaging for said base pet food;

(c) supplying a nutritional additive for said base pet food wherein said nutritional additive is separately packaged; and

(d) incorporating said separately packaged nutritional additive in said packaging for said base pet food and sealing said base pet food packaging containing said separately packaged nutritional additive.

16 The method of claim 15 wherein said packaging for said nutritional additive comprises an air-tight container which container can dispense said nutritional additive without substantially exposing the additive in said container to air.

17. The method of claim 16 including the step of opening said sealed base pet food packaging and dispensing said nutritional additive on to said base pet food.